

Naturopathy and Allergy/Intolerance

What is an Allergy?

When certain potentially harmful substances enter the body, our immune system reacts by producing antibodies against them. In the case of allergies, this occurs to non-harmful substances, such as foods or pollens. When these allergens are encountered by the person, their body over reacts to them, causing their symptoms to occur (the word “allergy” is of Greek origin, and means “altered reaction”). This reaction can be something as mild as an itchy nose, or a serious life threatening anaphylactic response.

Common Allergy Symptoms:

- Skin Rash
- Hives
- Nausea
- Hayfever
- Vomiting
- Swelling of the mouth, tongue, face and eyes
- Headache
- Breathing difficulties

Important note

If a person is having an anaphylactic reaction, seek urgent medical assistance.

What is an Intolerance?

A food intolerance is caused when a person lacks sufficient enzymes to digest certain foods. The most common of these is a deficiency of lactase, which is required to breakdown lactose (a sugar found in dairy products). This is very common in young children, and can be diagnosed from the presence of pale-coloured, bulky, smelly stools. Identifying an intolerance can be tricky as a person may be able to tolerate a small amount of a substance, but if it is consumed regularly over a short time-frame, a reaction may occur. Reactions to foods may also take several days to fully manifest.

Common Intolerance Symptoms:

- Diarrhoea
- Craving for a particular food
- Nausea
- Flatulence
- Bloating
- Migraines
- Stomach cramps
- Mood swings

Naturopathy and Allergy/Intolerance

Seeing a Naturopath can help you to better manage your allergies and/or intolerances. Naturopaths are able to assist in identifying your allergens/intolerances through further testing and analysis of your diet/lifestyle. There are a number of key nutrients and herbs that are wonderful at reducing the body's immune over-reaction. A process of de-sensitisation is possible for some people through the use of homoeopathic medicines.

Diseases/Conditions linked with Allergy/Intolerance

- Asthma
- Behavioural Problems
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Psoriasis
- Coeliac Disease
- Sinusitis
- Eczema
- Migraines
- Fatigue or low energy
- Hayfever
- Obesity
- Dermatitis
- Crohn's Disease
- Reactive Arthritis
- Frequent coughs and colds

Benefits of Identifying an Allergen/Intolerance

If an allergen/intolerance goes undetected for a long period of time, the problem can lead to long term ill-health. Often the reaction will become more severe with time, causing more problems than if it was identified early. For many people an underlying feeling of dis-ease can be eradicated when their allergen is removed from their diet/surroundings.

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